



# THE MAX



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I'M  
HERE.

I'M IN PANGAEA...  
THE OUTBACK...THE  
PRIMITIVE EXPRESSION  
OF ALL THAT THE  
CIVILIZED MIND  
DESIRES AND FEARS!

EXCEPT THE OUTBACK  
I REMEMBER WAS A  
LUSH AND VERDANT  
GRASSLAND...NOT A  
DESERT COVERED  
WITH SKULLS!

WELL,  
DAMN.

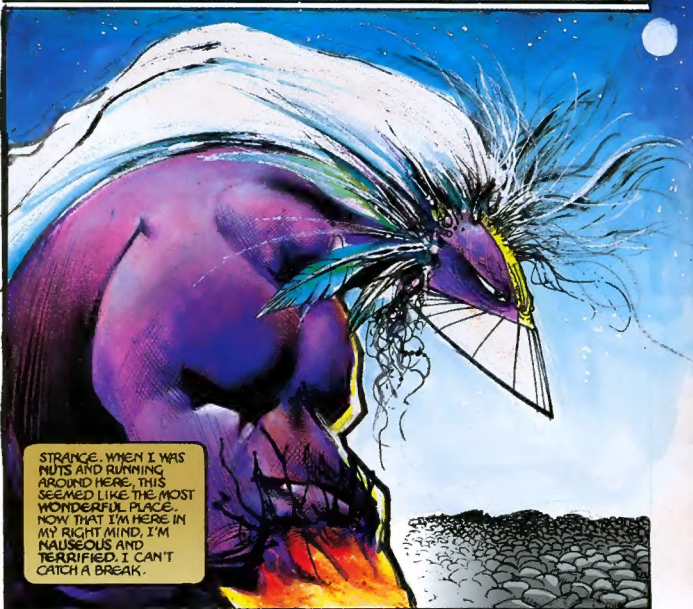




I WONDER  
HOW DEEP  
THE SKULLS  
GO?



AND HOW FAR?  
THEY SEEM TO  
COVER THE ENTIRE  
OUTBACK.

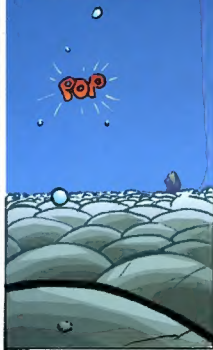


STRANGE. WHEN I WAS  
NUTS AND RUNNING  
AROUND HERE, THIS  
SEEMED LIKE THE MOST  
WONDERFUL PLACE.  
NOW THAT I'M HERE IN  
MY RIGHT MIND, I'M  
NAUSEOUS AND  
TERRIFIED. I CAN'T  
CATCH A BREAK.

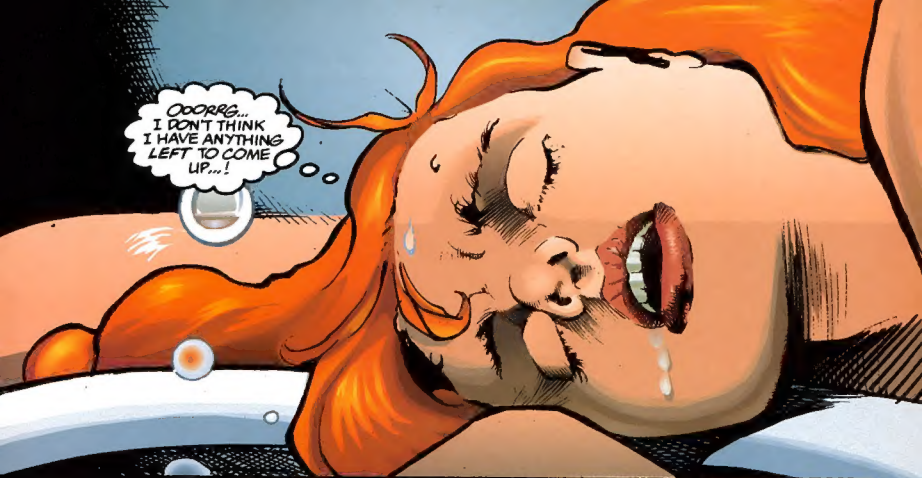
SHUF-SHUFF!  
STRANGE SMELL.  
I WONDER WHAT  
ROTTING HORRORS  
THESE SKULLS  
COVER?



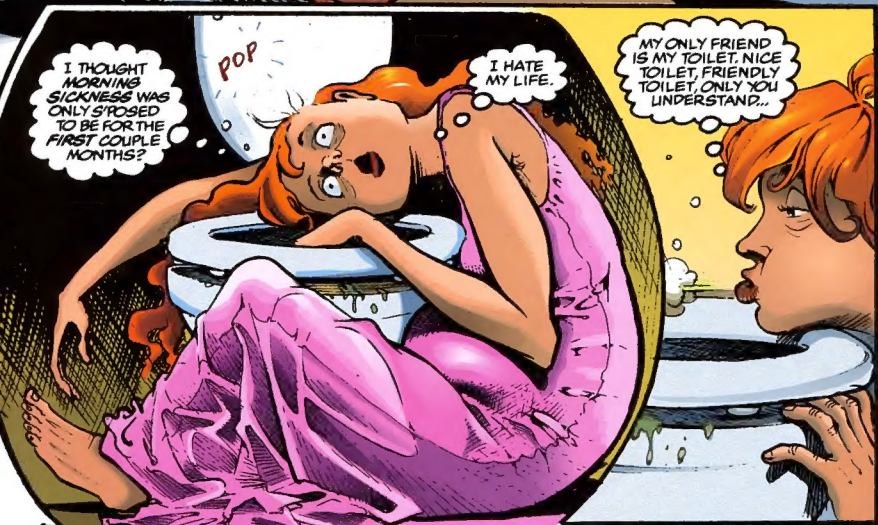
ONE DAY, THE  
POISON WILL  
HAVE TO COME  
UP...!







OOORRG...  
I DON'T THINK  
I HAVE ANYTHING  
LEFT TO COME  
UP...!



I THOUGHT  
MORNING  
SICKNESS WAS  
ONLY SUPPOSED  
TO BE FOR THE  
FIRST COUPLE  
MONTHS?

POP

I HATE  
MY LIFE.

MY ONLY FRIEND  
IS MY TOILET, NICE  
TOILET, FRIENDLY  
TOILET, ONLY YOU  
UNDERSTAND...



IF YOU WERE  
MY FRIEND,  
YOU'D CLEAN UP  
AFTER ME.

DEFINE  
"FRIEND"

IT WAS JUST A  
FEW HOURS AGO  
I WAS SAFE AND  
SECURE AND  
DOING BRITTLE  
DIALOGUE WITH  
JULIE.

I STILL  
DON'T SEE WHY  
YOU HAVE TO  
CHANGE THE  
WHOLE FRONT  
OF THE  
BUILDING.

'CAUSE I'M CHANGING  
THE WORLD IS CHANGING.  
MY HOUSE SHOULD BE  
A PART OF--OF...uh-oh--  
;MORRP;

WHOOA. I  
HATE WALKING IN  
AFTER THE MOVIES  
STARTED.

I GUESS  
YOU GUYS ARE  
TALKING  
NOW?

I GUESS. I  
WAS FEELING  
ROTTEN THIS  
MORNING, SO I  
SENT ONE OF  
THOSE GUYS  
OUT TO FIND  
MAXX...

AND I CAME,  
SHOWING HOW  
DISMAL THE  
REST OF MY  
LIFE IS.

UH-OH...

WHAT?

ACCORDING TO  
THESE BLUE-PRINTS,  
THOSE WORKMEN  
JUST CUT THROUGH  
A BEARING  
WALL.





IT WAS  
AWFULLY NICE  
OF YOU TO RUSH  
OVER HERE,  
MAXX...

THAT'S OKAY. I  
GUESS I FORGIVE  
YOU, JULIE. NO MATTER  
HOW BIG A JERK  
YOU WERE OR HOW  
SLUTTY YOU  
ACTED...

YOU'RE  
STILL MY  
FRIEND.

WAIT A  
SECOND. YOU  
FORGIVE ME...?  
I WAS THE ONE  
THAT CAUGHT  
YOU TWO IN  
BED.

MAXX, LET'S  
TAKE A WALK  
BEFORE WE  
SMOTHER FROM  
ALL THE GOOD  
WILL IN THIS  
ROOM.



MAXX, WE HAVE  
TO TALK... I LISTENED  
TO DAD'S TAPES... THEY  
TOLD ME EVERYTHING!

THAT NIGHT, IT WASN'T  
OUR BODIES THAT JOINED,  
IT WAS OUR MINDS! WE  
HAD EACH OTHER'S DREAMS...  
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE!

BUT MORE  
IMPORTANT... I KNOW WHAT  
YOU'VE GOTTA DO! WE HAVE  
TO GO BACK WHERE IT STARTED  
IN THIS WORLD, BUT AT THE  
SAME TIME, YOU HAVE TO GO  
INTO THE OUTBACK AS  
YOURSELF!

YOU HAVE  
TO BRING ON THE  
HEADACHE... GO  
TOWARDS THE  
NOISE. CONTROL  
THE PROCESS!

CAN YOU  
AT LEAST TRY,  
DAVE?

WHY DID SHE CALL ME THAT

UHHH...! IT'S STARTED!

I WILL TRY!

I WILL MOVE TOWARDS THE SOURCE OF THE DRUMS...! IGNORE THE PAIN! LEAP INTO THE VOID!

AND FINALLY FIND OUT WHAT THOSE DAMNED CHUNGS MEAN!

FOR I AM THE **MAXX!**

**CHUNG**

WHY DID SHE CALL ME THAT

UHHH...!  
IT'S  
STARTED!

I WILL  
TRY!

I WILL MOVE  
TOWARDS THE  
SOURCE OF  
THE DRUMS...!  
IGNORE THE  
PAIN! LEAP INTO  
THE VOID!

AND FINALLY  
FIND OUT WHAT  
THOSE DAMNED  
CHUNGS MEAN!

FOR I AM THE  
**MAXX!**

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AND FINALLY FIND OUT WHAT THOSE DAMNED CHUNGS MEAN!

FOR I AM THE  
**MAXX!**

**CHUNG CHUNG CHUNG**

WHY DID SHE CALL ME THAT

UHHH...! IT'S STARTED!

I WILL TRY!

I WILL MOVE TOWARDS THE SOURCE OF THE DRUMS...! IGNORE THE PAIN! LEAP INTO THE VOID!

AND FINALLY FIND OUT WHAT THOSE DAMNED CHUNGS MEAN!

FOR I AM THE **MAXX!**



AND THAT'S HOW IT HAPPENED.  
JUST THAT SIMPLE. I WAS STANDING  
HERE, AND I KNEW WHO I WAS!  
I REMEMBERED!

BUT EVERYTHING  
ELSE IS DIFFERENT.

AND THESE  
SKULLS...ARE  
ISZ SKULLS!

SOMEHOW ALL  
THE VEGETATION  
HERE DIED...

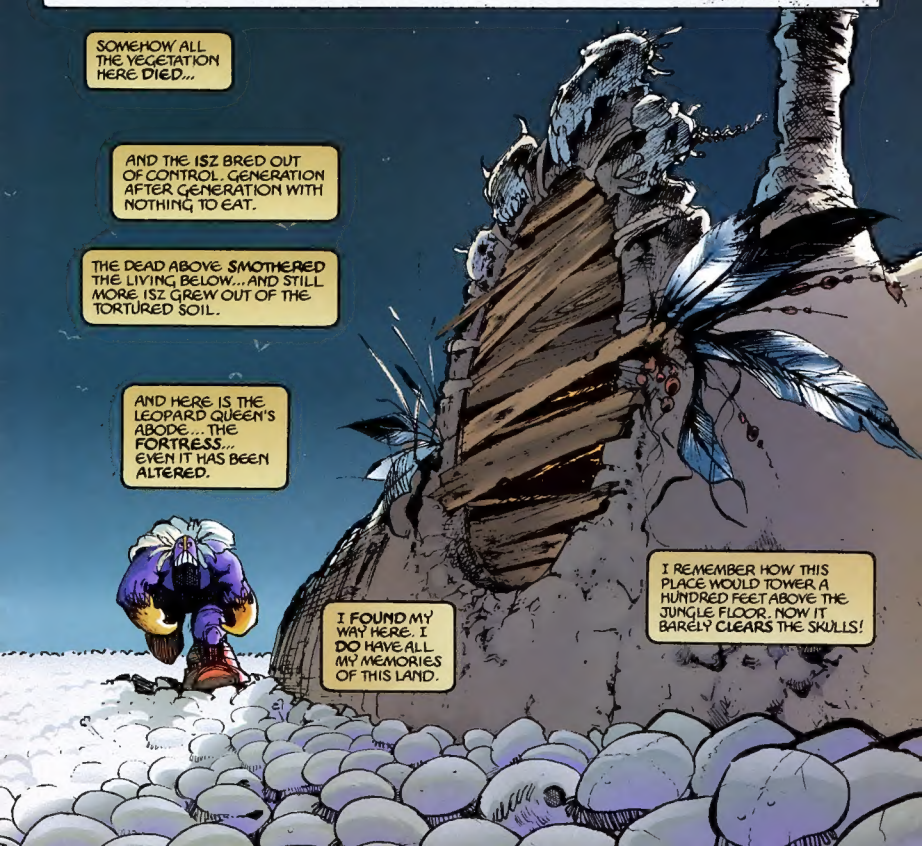
AND THE ISZ BRED OUT  
OF CONTROL. GENERATION  
AFTER GENERATION WITH  
NOTHING TO EAT.

THE DEAD ABOVE SMOTHERED  
THE LIVING BELOW...AND STILL  
MORE ISZ GREW OUT OF THE  
TORTURED SOIL.

AND HERE IS THE  
LEOPARD QUEEN'S  
ABODE...THE  
FORTRESS...  
EVEN IT HAS BEEN  
ALTERED.

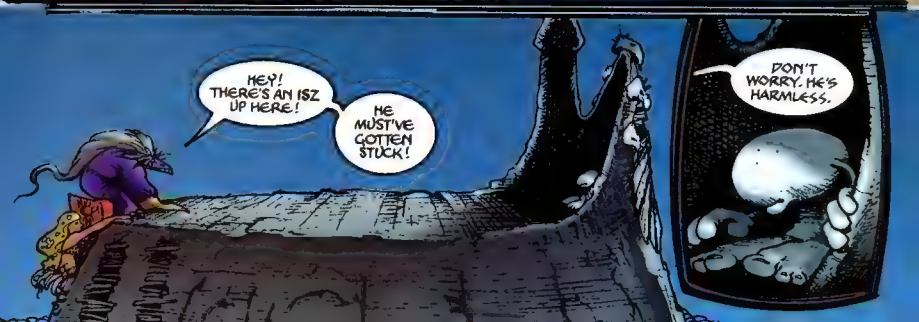
I FOUND MY  
WAY HERE. I  
DO HAVE ALL  
MY MEMORIES  
OF THIS LAND.

I REMEMBER HOW THIS  
PLACE WOULD TOWER A  
HUNDRED FEET ABOVE THE  
JUNGLE FLOOR. NOW IT  
BARELY CLEARS THE SKULLS!











YOU SEE,  
WE HAVE TO  
GET THERE IN  
A HURRY...SO  
WE'LL GO  
BY ROCK.

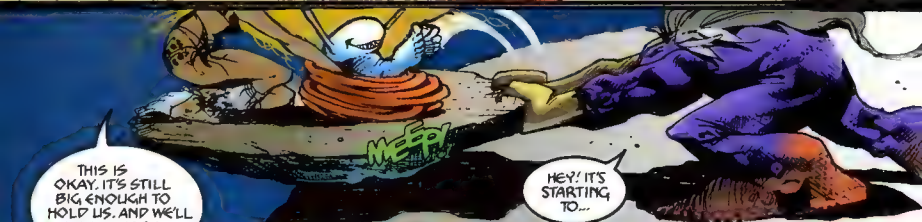
YOU MEAN,  
BREAK OFF A  
LAYER LIKE...  
THIS?

JUST WHEN I FEEL MY  
LIFE IS UNDER CONTROL,  
SOMEBODY SAYS SOME-  
THING LIKE, "WE'LL GO  
BY ROCK!"

NO, NO!  
YOU BROKE  
IT!

I'M SO TIRED OF  
SCREWING UP!

**CRACK!**



THIS IS  
OKAY. IT'S STILL  
BIG ENOUGH TO  
HOLD US. AND WE'LL  
NEED THESE  
VINES...

HEY! IT'S  
STARTING  
TO...

**WHUMP!**

JUMP  
ON! IT'S  
MOVING!

...FLOAT!  
IT'S STARTING  
TO FLOAT!

DON'T  
PANK. IT'S NOT  
MOVING THAT  
FAST.






SEE? THE VOLCANO!

YEAH. AT THIS RATE, WE'LL GET THERE IN A COUPLE OF DAYS!

YOUR TONGUE IS ODDLY SHARP, BRER LAPIN.

THE CLOSER WE GET TO THE VOLCANO, THE FASTER WE'LL GO. YOU'LL SEE.

I KEPT WANTING TO ASK, "HOW CAN ROCKS FLY?" BUT IN CONTEXT IT SEEMS LIKE A DWEEBY QUESTION.



LIE DOWN AND REST, BRER LAPIN. NO TELLING WHEN WE'LL HAVE THE CHANCE AGAIN.

AND JUST LIKE THAT SHE WAS ASLEEP. WE SWUNG OUT THROUGH THE VOID, WITH ONLY THE WIND WHISPERING AGAINST THE SIDES OF THE ROCK.



MEEP!



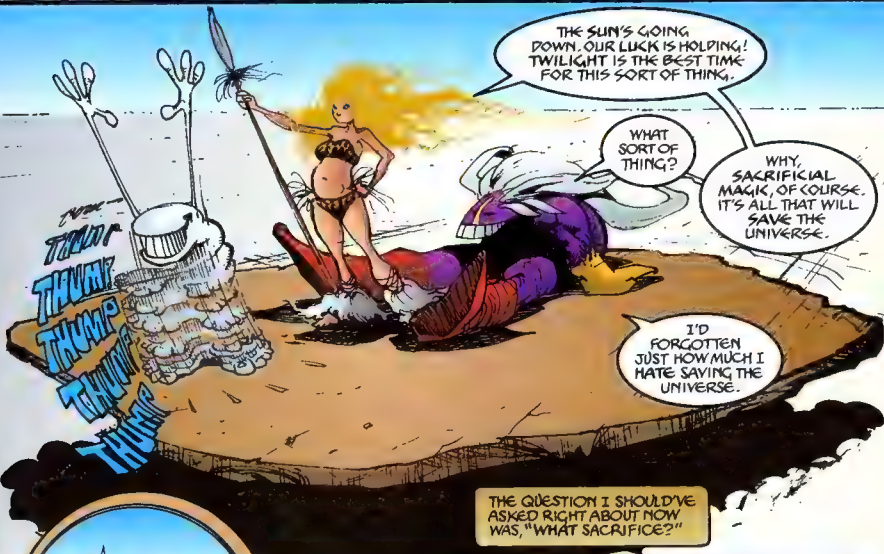
WAKE UP, BRER LAPIN. WE'RE NEARLY THERE.

IT WAS NEARLY LATE AFTERNOON. I HAD SLEPT THROUGH THE NIGHT AND MOST OF THE FOLLOWING DAY. SURREALISM TAKES A LOT OUT OF YOU.

HEY, IT'S BIGGER!

THE FASTER WE GO, THE WIDER IT GROWS. REMEMBER?

UH, SURE!



THE SUN'S GOING DOWN. OUR LUCK IS HOLDING! TWILIGHT IS THE BEST TIME FOR THIS SORT OF THING.

WHAT SORT OF THING?

WHY, SACRIFICIAL MAGIC, OF COURSE. IT'S ALL THAT WILL SAVE THE UNIVERSE.

I'D FORGOTTEN JUST HOW MUCH I HATE SAYING THE UNIVERSE.

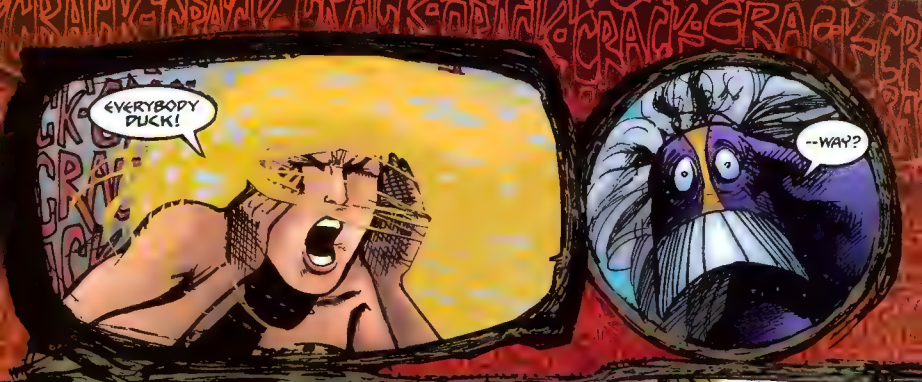
THE QUESTION I SHOULD'VE ASKED RIGHT ABOUT NOW WAS, "WHAT SACRIFICE?"



THERE'S NOTHING LIKE FLYING ON A SLAB OF ROCK OVER AN ENDLESS FIELD OF SKULLS TOWARD A MYSTICALLY SMOLDERING VOLCANO TO REALLY GIVE YOU A SENSE OF YOUR OWN MORTALITY.

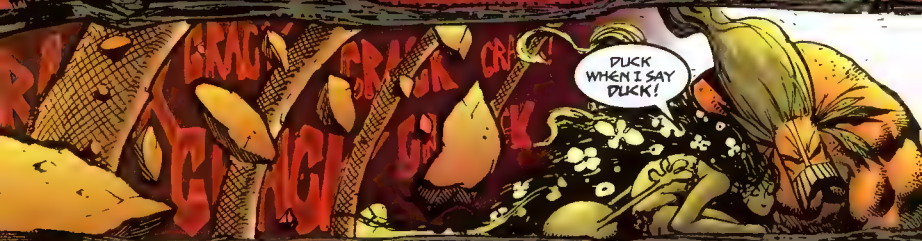
CAN WE STEER THIS THING OR ARE WE ON AUTOPILOT? I MEAN, WHAT IF SOMETHINGS IN OUR--





EVERYBODY  
DUCK!

--WAY?



DUCK  
WHEN I SAY  
DUCK!



IT'S AN  
AIR WHALE SKELETON!  
AND WE'RE GOING RIGHT  
THROUGH IT!

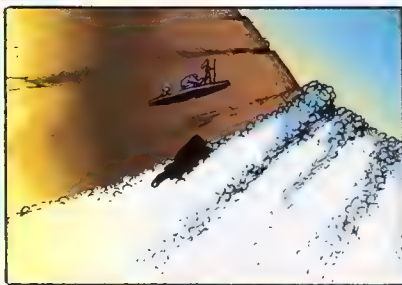
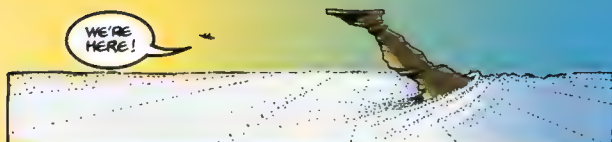


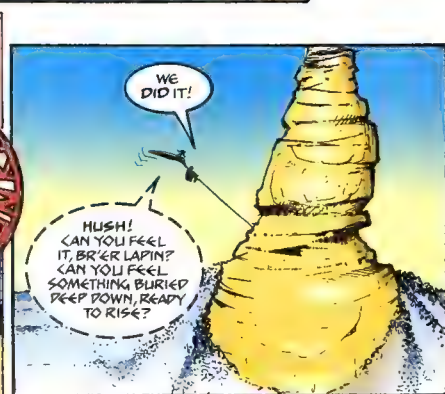
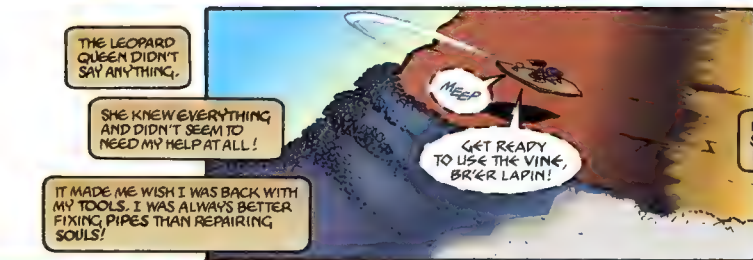
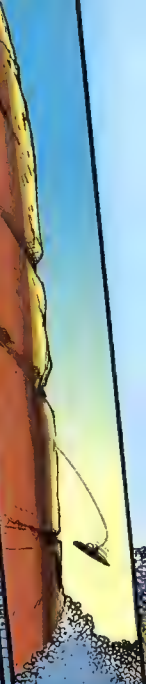
GUESS THAT  
ANSWERS THAT  
QUESTION.

GOD KNOWS  
WHAT'S HAPPENING  
BACK IN...

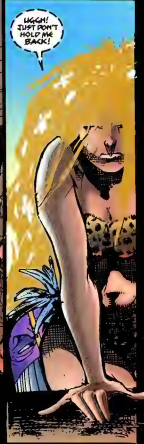












I REMEMBERED THE HOT, FLARING LAVA, THE BUBBLING, WHEN I DIPPED MY CLAWS IN IT TO TEMPER THEM, SO MANY YEARS BEFORE...

PAST EVENTS WERE COMING BACK TO ME IN A FLOOD!

IT WAS ALL I COULD DO TO KEEP MY FOOTING!



HEY! IT'S JUST  
WATER!

SILLY  
RABBIT! THAT'S  
JUST ON  
TOP!

UNDERNEATH...

...THERE'S  
SOMETHING  
THAT WANTS  
TO COME  
UP.







After two years of hermitude, I finally broke down and decided to go to San Diego Comic Con this year, but the only day I'll be signing is Saturday. So if yer in town...

There's a bunch of interesting/bizarre Maxx stuff in the future that I'm busting to tell you about, but I can't. Not yet. Two things, though: The Todd Toy is in the works, and from what I've seen, it's way cool. The best part of all is that each Maxx figure will come with a little white ls. (And keep your eyes peeled for collector black ls in random boxes.) The bad news: They won't be out 'til '96.

The #2 piece of news is that Wizard and I will be releasing a 12-page "Special Preview" thingie to be included in their October issue. I will be drawing some preview material from Issue 21 (to be released in December), along with some Maxx sketchbook stuff.

E-mail us: [nghtime@aol.com](mailto:nghtime@aol.com)

Dear Mr. Kieth,

As you may know, there was a bombing here in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. I'm writing you to see if you could dedicate a future issue of The Maxx to the OKC bombing victims. If not, maybe have the OKC bombing mentioned in an upcoming Maxx storyline. Anything to acknowledge that the OKC bombing occurred in the Image universe as well as the real world. I'm just asking for the victims.

(name withheld by request)

Your letter, and the fact that you wrote it, is a more moving testament than anything we could've come up with. Heads (and their hearts) are with everybody in OK-City.

Dear Mr. Kieth,

Why is there a frame of Mr. Gone (from the "Yup. Man, this is going to be a long night" shot) seen in the <SPLAT SQUAWK MEEP SUCE HACK SLICE MEEP SQUEEK> lsz slaughter just before the "They are all dead, I have killed all..." scene in Episode 4 of the toon (from Issue 3, page 8)? (You can only see it if you frame-by-frame it on your VCR, or if you

have really sharp eyes, like me.) Is this a subliminal thing?

Your newly recruited and utterly devoted fan,  
Patrick W. Heinske  
Garner, NC

I don't have a tape handy—anybody else see what this guy's talking about?

Dear Sam,

How could you? You printed a letter from the great Olav Beemer and you spelled his name wrong! Have you no shame?

Sincerely,  
Augie De Bleeck Jr.  
N. Haledon, NJ

PS Oh yeah. I love the cartoon!

Of course I have no shame—look at what I publish every month. That rascal Augie De Bleeck is always on my tail, pointing out my mistakes. Then again, we did call him "Angie" a few issues back...Dammit, he's right again! Sorry, Olav.

Dear Sam Kieth,

You should put less blood in comics because it makes killing look fun. If kids see that when they are little, they might kill when they get older. They might think killing is awesome when it is really dangerous.

ERIK TURNER  
Kennesaw, GA





It is bad to give that to kids.

Signed,  
Brian Coyle  
Highland Heights, KY

**Killing is dangerous—now there's a concept!**

Dear Sam,

Could you please please please have someone get their ear or ears ripped off? I've always wanted to rip someone's ear off, but I'd be happy just to see someone else do it.

Thanks for your time,  
R.L.  
Atlanta, GA

**I just can't make anybody happy...I think we need to change the subject. How about some origin speculation:**

Dear Sam,

I've often wondered where you got the idea for such an original concept. The only thing that I can think of is the old movie Harvey in which Jimmy Stewart has a 7-foot-tall invisible rabbit spirit/protector called a pooka. Am I right?

Sincerely,  
Brian Zeiders

No.

Dear Sam,

The Maxx reads as if you, sir, are doing a version of the oldest recorded tale of sibling rivalry know to man, Cain vs. Abel. Maxx is Abel. Gone

is Cain possessed by Satan. Then again, with the way Maxx shifts dimensions in his dreams (or is it that he's really in dreamtime?), you'd think he was some sort of burnout that even Timothy Leary couldn't help. Weird reading, but the visuals are like a cross-section of Frazetta (natch), Doug Wildey, and V. T. Hamlin. Ah, that last one should give you pause.

Forward to the present. Julie's link and relationship with Maxx are in tatters. She's gone and gotten pregnant, and she practically doesn't care if she sees the baby's father again. Sarah is Maxx's new soulmate, but I can't see that lasting. It's been suggested that Sarah and Julie are sisters or cousins, so Julie's anger in issue 15 seems more natural than one might think. Anyway, judging from Julie's appearance, I'd say she's already three months along, right?

Jacob Gilbert

Troy, NY

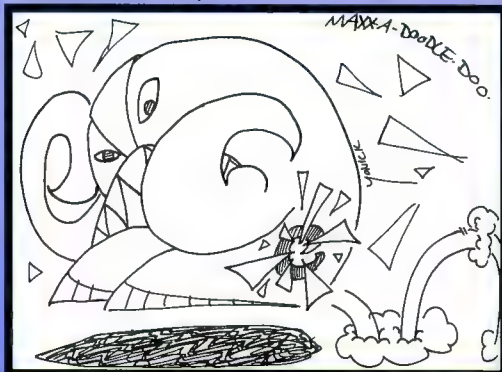
**Five, actually.**

Dear Sam,

Now about this "Maxx is rabbit" thing. I DON'T THINK SO! That is much too obvious. I figured out your little comic, Mr. Kieth. Maxx is not a rabbit. Maxx is a construction worker from Ohio. Now before you print "Does anyone have any idea what he's talking about?", let me show you the similarities:

- 1) They both like Pez and toast
- 2) Neither are cross-dressers (at least I hope not)
- 3) Maxx is constantly trying to figure out his life which won't happen until the comic is cancelled (which won't happen). Construction workers whistle at women they'll never get unless they take a shower and learn some manners (which won't happen). So, basically they both have goals that they will never accomplish.

Am I the only one who can notice these things? Anyway, Maxx rules! Sorry if I offended any construction workers, but somebody had to say it sometime.



Josh Vance  
Normal, IL  
**I wish I could be from Normal.**

Dear Sam,

Here's what we know so far. Maxx is this purple rabbit dude with a big overbite who, as a child, found Steve Oliff, of Olyoptics, lying in the middle of the road. He had been hit by a car. Maxx put Steve in a shoe-box and kept him

in the garage. Well, Maxx's mom was driven nuts by this scraping sound that Steve kept making, so she put him out of his misery with a shovel. Mr. Gone is this bum who lives in a cardboard box in



a New York alleyway. Julie Winters is this babe whose pot belly gets a little fatter all the time. She is very evil and has a looong blue cape. She keeps trying to tell Maxx something about his past, but every time she does, Maxx cuts off her head. Bill Loeb is the guy who does the coloring of the comic. Mike Heisler is the guy who writes and draws the comic, and Sam Kieth is the guy who does the lettering. What a great comicbook.

Justin Francis  
Fremont, CA

**Gadzooks—you have me totally bumfuzzled!**

Sam Kieth,

The Maxx is wonderful, but I have just one question. Well, actually two:

- 1) How badly was Maxx hurt when he was mugged in issue 15. I mean, he was just lying there behind his box for what seems like hours.
- 2) Is it just me, or does the shadow of one of the prisoners on page 12 look just a little bit like Maxx's?

Venus-Bob  
Anonymous, OH

I have just one answer. Well, actually two:

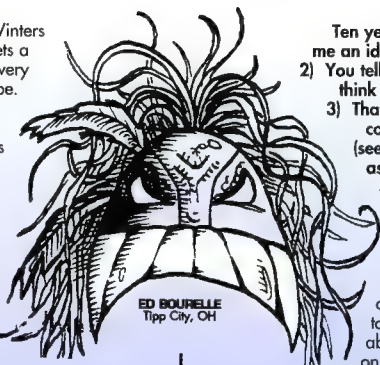
- 1) His butt wasn't as badly bruised as his pride.
- 2) The shadow thing is just you, but we did screw up, since I meant to mention that the guy in the jail was Fridge.

Dear Maxx Creww,

- 1) I think you should put out a make-your-own-Pez-dispenser contest where we convert ordinary Pez dispensers into Maxx characters and the winner gets a free crate of Pez refills!!! How bout it???
- 2) What type of music do Maxx and Sarah listen to??? (I know it's been asked, but I think you should tell us more.) Do they like Smashing Pumpkins (I do); how about Pizzicato 5 or Starchildren. I bet they like the Afghan Whigs.
- 3) I think your comic has the coolest letter column in the world.
- 4) I can't figure out issue #14.
- 5) I can't figure out any of the other issues.

Ben Steidel  
Danville, CA

- 1) The Pez People have been talked to; here's the scoop. Pez lost mucho money on a Happy Days dispenser in the '70's while trying to cash in on a fad, so they like to wait at least a decade to make sure we're not just a flash in the pan. So until we're ten years older, we'll have to settle for making/trading bootleg dispensers (I have four so far, thanx to industrious fans). No contest, though. Our mailperson has a bad back.



Ten years? Saaya...that gives me an idea for Ish 21...

- 2) You tell me. What do you guys think they listen to?
- 3) That's because we have the coolest fans in the world (see, I can kiss butt just as good as anyone).
- 4) Get in line.
- 5) That's an even longer line.

Dear Sam,

I love your Maxx comics I only need 6 more to get 1 through 15. I write about The Maxx all the time on my computer and draw The Maxx all the time and I

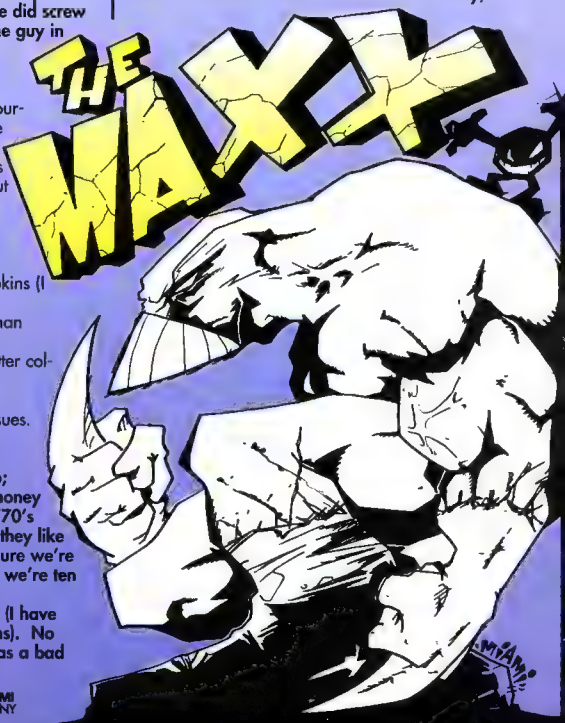
got most of my friends to like The Maxx. I've seen all the episodes of The Maxx and I love them.

What I want to know is will you ever show The Maxx's face and will The Maxx end at comic number 20 I hope not The Maxx is my favorite. I even got my mom interested in Maxx well keep up the Maximum great work

Your Maximum fan  
Matt Kwiatkowski

Use the word "Maxx" much? I love the way you do away with boring stuff like punctuation. Get right to the meat, I say.

You saw Maxx's face in this issue and boy,



what a shocker. I mean, a rabbit—Wow! Nobody saw that coming, right? **BUT**—just because we saw his face in the Outback doesn't mean we will ever see it in this dimension. (Those of us who occasionally visit this dimension, that is.)

And no, Matt, I refuse to end with Ish 20. That would be too easy...

Hey Sam,

This letter is to Chris, who also wrote in to Head to Head last issue:

I just want to say Thanks a lot!! You got me hooked on reading The Maxx and now I can't seem to get anything done. If I'm at work I'm thinking about the next Maxx issue. If I'm at play I'm thinking about the next issue of The Maxx! In fact the other night while me and my girlfriend were making passionate whoopie, I accidently cried out **MAXX!!!** Talk about embarrassing!!! So if you do read this (and I know you will because you always read the letter pages) I just want you to know that I don't get mad, I get Maxx, er umm, even!! Dammit I'm doing it again!!!!

Thanks for your indulgence Sam and keep up the great work!!!

Explanation-point-happy Joe  
Menominee, MI

Dear Sam Kieth,

Your Fridge/Ish story seemed to me like

some old Strange tales comic, or some other old EC title. I liked the way I could only see the Is's sneakers sliding deeper into the shadows, because besides adding tension, it took advantage of your smooth storytelling, which is what I like most about your art. I also thought it was kind of cool to see Fridge again since we haven't seen him since issue 1. Now I half suspect a similar type of story involving Sgt. Oono and his suspicions of the little creepy guys he seems to be getting a lot of lately.

Also, when I saw Maxx get mugged I thought (besides thinking what Maxx might've had that someone else could have possibly wanted) how deluded Maxx really is. How can he expect to protect the lives of others if he can't even keep himself from getting mugged?

Thanks for your time,  
Tony Vance  
Thousand Oaks, CA

That's the point.

Dear Sam,

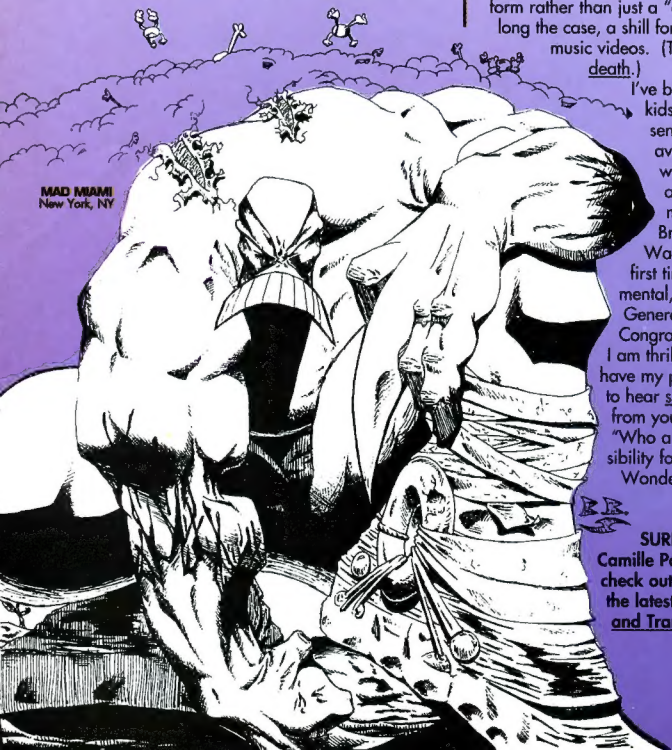
Thanks a lot for sending the tapes of the first two episodes of The Maxx! Students had stopped me in the halls telling me about it in April. I've been taping it since then, but I was missing those early episodes.

The show is terrific! So eerie, fascinating, and mysterious. It's obviously a landmark in TV broadcasting, establishing animation as an art form rather than just a "cartoon" or, as was too long the case, a skill for trendy special effects for music videos. (The latter was done to death.)

I've been lamenting that the kids of the '90's have no sense of how film was avant-garde in the '60's, when college students my age saw tons of experimental film, from Stan Brakbake to gritty early Warhol. The Maxx for the first time captures that experimental, mind-bending mode for Generation X on a broad scale. Congratulations!! And of course I am thrilled beyond words to have my poster in the show—and to hear spoken the great words from your original printed strip, "Who are you to assume responsibility for their lives?" Wonderful!

Best wishes,  
Camille Paglia  
**SURELY** you know who  
Camille Paglia is by now! And  
check out Julie's appearance in  
the latest Paglia book, Vamps  
and Tramps, if you dare.

MAD MIAMI  
New York, NY





# MAXX

fan art

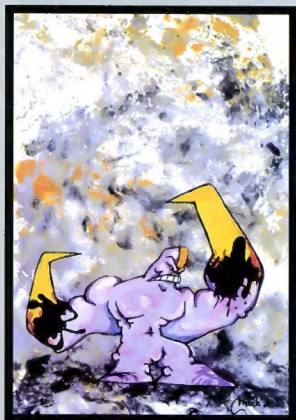
**JAMES DEAN CONKLIN**  
New York, New York



**MARTIN LOPEZ**  
Mexico

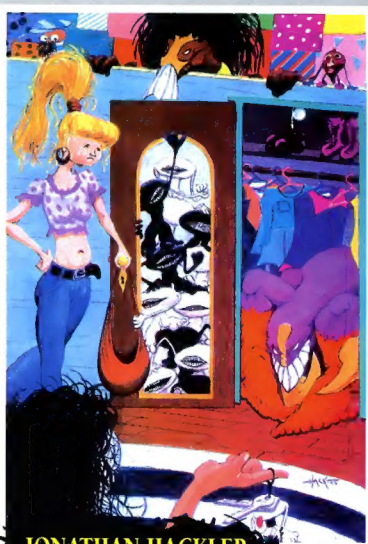
**ANDREA MINOJA**

Padova, Italy



**MICK DIDIER**

France



**JONATHAN HACKLER**

High Point, North Carolina





**DAN ROMAN**  
New Babylon, New York